



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	510132
Inspection date	07 November 2006
Inspector	Elaine Steedman
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder became registered in 2000. She lives with her husband, daughter aged nine years and adult son at their home in Cramlington in Northumberland. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years. There are currently eight children on roll, of whom seven are aged under eight years.

Minded children have access to the ground floor lounge-diner, kitchen-diner and utility area and a first floor bathroom. The rear garden is used for outdoor play. The premises are within walking distance of local transport, toddler groups, playgroups, local nurseries and schools, shops, parks, leisure centre and the library.

The childminder makes use of local facilities and children take part in local walks and outings to soft play centres, parks, the beach, museums and Plessey Woods.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children follow good personal hygiene routines. They have good opportunities through discussion with the childminder, to learn why it is important to develop good personal hygiene habits. They learn to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating or handling food and after handling pets or taking part in outdoor or messy play. The childminder's effective maintenance arrangements ensure the environment is clean and hygienic, for example, toileting equipment and nappy changing mats are cleaned immediately after use. She employs good strategies to prevent the spread of infection, for example, by observing incubation periods for infectious diseases and using disposable gloves and towels.

Health records are well maintained and comprehensive enabling the childminder to effectively keep parents informed about their child's well-being and cater for children's individual health needs.

The childminder has a good understanding of healthy diets for children and provides them with balanced nutritious meals. Children have opportunities to learn about the benefits of a healthy diet, such as the childminder discussing healthy eating with them. Children are actively encouraged to drink water and are provided with healthy snacks including fresh fruit. The childminder takes into account children's individual needs and complies with parental wishes. For example, she provides meals which support a child's medical needs.

Children's health is further promoted by having good opportunities to exercise in the fresh air. Children play with outdoor toys which encourage their physical development and participate in a range of outdoor activities, for example, playing in the garden, daily walks and outings.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and very comfortable home. The home is well organised for childcare and children can move around safely. Regular, effective maintenance ensures children's toys and equipment remain safe for their use.

Children's safety is well promoted through the childminder's good awareness of safety issues, good supervision and effective security measures. The childminder has good safety procedures in place; however, blind cords are accessible to children and written parental consent is not held for taking children on outings. She uses safety equipment effectively, such as safety gates to prevent children's access to the stairs. Through discussions with the childminder, children have good opportunities to learn about dangers and how to stay safe. The childminder explains to children how to take care of themselves, for example, to avoid running or climbing indoors, to stay within set boundaries when out and how to cross roads safely.

Children's welfare is well protected by the childminder's recent attendance on child protection training and her good understanding of child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of child development and very good relationships with the children. She plans good routines and presents children with a variety of opportunities to enjoy and learn through play. She joins in their activities enthusiastically and listens and talks to children about their interests and activities. She matches play activities and toys well to children's learning and developmental needs and successfully encourages them to interact with their environment. Children are encouraged to develop their social skills through playing with other children, sharing toys and taking turns. Children are well occupied, very happy in their play and have good opportunities to develop their imagination and practise their developing skills.

Children choose independently from a wide range of easily accessible, developmentally appropriate, good quality, stimulating toys and activities. For example, play people and small world imaginative toys, construction, role play toys, jigsaws, manipulative toys, musical instruments, activity centres, games, art and craft activities, growing seeds, making seed cakes for birds, playdough and cooking.

Children enjoy a good range of outdoor activities, for example, garden play, daily walks and a variety of outings, including visits to the beach, parks, Plessey Woods and museums.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder welcomes all children and respects their differing needs. She uses the information she collects about each child to effectively address their individual needs. Children have access to all play resources and equipment and are encouraged in their choices. Children are helped to develop self-esteem and to learn to respect others through discussions with the childminder. Children learn about their own community and the wider world through discussion with the childminder and local outings. Children have access to a good range of resources and activities showing positive images of diversity. Resources and activities reflecting different abilities are limited, however.

Children have very good relationships with the childminder and behave very well. The childminder is relaxed, warm and very affectionate towards children, and children respond likewise. The childminder acts as a positive role model, enthusiastically praising children's efforts and treating them respectfully. She successfully uses developmentally appropriate strategies, such as positive praise, to manage children's behaviour. Children learn about reasonable behaviour boundaries and to be caring and considerate towards others. They share and take turns and play well together without conflict. Children are very well settled, very happy and enjoy being with the childminder who is very attentive to their needs.

The childminder has good arrangements for promoting children's care, such as children's introductory visits with their parents. She works very closely with parents, has very positive relationships with them and communicates with them regularly about their children and the

service. For example, through sharing daily diaries, displaying notices and providing relevant information for parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides. The childminder has completed the required training and children benefit from the childminder's recent attendance on extra training in child protection. Children's needs are well supported by the childminder's effective organisation of space, resources and routines. Children have easy access to the facilities and equipment they need.

All the required records are held, with the exception of parental consents for outings, otherwise, records are well organised, up to date and are shared with parents. The childminder has good procedures for communicating with parents, such as a parental notice area where relevant information is displayed. She keeps them well informed about their children's progress. For example, the childminder gives parents a detailed verbal report when they collect their child. Good security measures are observed to protect confidentiality.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has satisfactorily addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection. She has increased the supply of multi-cultural toys and activities that children have access to. She has attended child protection training and has developed a good understanding of child protection issues.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- protect children further by ensuring blind cords are made inaccessible and written parental consents are obtained for taking children on outings
- develop children's understanding of diversity further by providing them with resources and activities which help them to learn about different abilities.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk